The National Anti-Slavery Standard,
VOL. XXVII. PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.
AARON M. POWELL, *Editor.*
WENDELL PHILLIPS, *Special Editorial Contributor.*
39 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK.

Originally sent to A. M. Powell, Aug. 26. 1867.
(the day of S. J. M.'s coming to see me)

Powell declined to
insert it (see his letter),
& referred it to W. Phillips

Phillips refused to insert it,
(see St. of Sept. 7.)

This Mss. came back to me,
Sept. 6. 1867.

2.800
4.200
12.000

Samuel May. Jr.
Leicester
Mass.

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Francis Jackson's Anti-slavery Bequest.

To the Editor of the National Anti-Slavery Standard:

[The last thing I ever looked forward to, is anything like controversy on this subject with old anti-slavery associates; and I still hope to avoid it.] I have seen the editorial article in your paper of the 10th inst., and I recognize the right of Mr. Purvis, and ~~of all~~ others interested, to call for any information the trustees in this case can give. You have already given (in said editorial) the view of one of them. As an act of justice, I do not doubt you will allow me, also a trustee of Francis Jackson, to state ~~my views, and my reasons for the same~~ mine

I should be glad to feel sure of a candid hearing. But when your inquirer says his "blood moved to fever heat", and his whole letter shews that he had already pre-judged the case, speaking, as he does, of some persons who have "mis-directed" "means justly belonging to the American Anti-Slavery Society", the encouragement to proceed is small. Yet I know there are those who will hear me fairly, and I am unwilling ~~loth~~ to think that Mr. Purvis will not himself be one of them.

Francis Jackson died Nov. 14, 1861, leaving in his will, not to any Society or Journal, but to certain Trustees - the sum of Ten thousand dollars, "to be expended as they deem best for the preparation and circulation of books, newspapers, the delivery of speeches, lectures, and such other means as will put an end to negro slavery in this country"; and to the same Trustees the further sum of Two thousand dollars, "to be expended by them for the benefit of fugitive slaves, who may escape from the Slave-holding States of this infamous Union.

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The trustees had duly organized & entered on the discharge of their duties, when they received notice that the validity of the will ~~had~~ was disputed by, or in behalf of, Mr. Jackson's legal heirs. ~~Their work of course was brought to a full stop when the case was carried~~ Of course their work as trustees was stopped. All the anxious years of the war rolled by, when the friends of Slavery, North & South, were straining every nerve to ~~prolong it~~ preserve it, and we longed to use the fund, expressly left by Francis Jackson for just such an exigency, to aid in its overthrow. But it was withholden from us. Slavery was abolished by Constitutional amendment, and January, 1867 came before all obstacles were removed, and the Court decided that the bequests of the Antislavery and Fugitive funds were legal. "These two charitable trusts" say the Court, "were not terminated or destroyed by the abolition of Slavery by the thirteenth article of amendment of the Constitution of the United States; but are to be applied to carry out in a lawful manner the intentions of the testator as nearly as possible, according to a scheme to be settled by a Master in Chancery and approved by the Court, before the funds are paid over to the Trustees named in the will."

The Master in Chancery appointed by the Court invited the Trustees to give him their opinion how the fund should be appropriated; not, of course, with any understanding that their opinion, even if unanimous, should control him, or would control the Court's final action; but that it would be an important element in making up his report. ~~The Trustees~~ Five of the trustees met in Boston on Monday Jan. 28th. ~~Apart~~ Two claimed the fund for the "Standard", two desired it to go wholly to the Freedmen's Cause, and one (the Executor) was ready to give (as he afterwards told me himself) Two Thousand Dollars to the "Standard",

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-and the remainder (if I rightly remember) to the Freedmen. It was found that ~~the~~ trustees ~~were~~ could not be ~~named~~ united on either one of these, and a motion was made, by Mr. Garrison, to give Four Thousand Two Hundred Dollars to the "Standard", and Five Thousand Dollars to the Freedmen's Union Commission; & that motion was declared adopted, only Messrs. Garrison & Whipple actually voting.

I was not present at the ~~xx~~ meeting. It was held at a time when I could not attend it, ~~xxx~~ as I had previously given notice; ~~of that fact~~; but circumstances ~~had~~ overruled the Executor's purpose to name another day. On learning with surprise, ~~of the time fixed~~ that the time was fixed as above, I ~~could only agree to~~ could only write a hurried note to the Secretary, to say that, in my judgment, the entire fund should be appropriated to the Freedmen's Commission. ~~Could not, from the beginning, avoid~~ Had I been present, I am confident that the reasons I should have given against the appropriation of this fund, or any part of it, to the "Standard", would have prevented the vote which was passed; and I know I had an equal right with ~~xx~~ others to be at that meeting, and to present my reasons for consideration. I should have objected to the division proposed by the vote, for the following reasons:

1. Mr. Jackson's will required the money to be expended for the overthrow of Negro Slavery. ~~xxxxx~~ That work was done; ~~when~~ Slavery was overthrown; ~~because~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ And the Court had directed a use of ~~xxx~~ the fund to be reported, which should carry out the testator's will "as nearly as possible". In the changed circumstances, I could not possibly know how Mr. Jackson would wish the fund to be expended. None of us could know. One of the trustees (Mr. W.) thought he would give it all to the American Anti-Slavery Society. Another (Mr. B.) said he believed Mr. Jackson, if living, would give it all to the Woman's Rights Cause.

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4.

For myself I ~~had to give not~~ knew Mr. Jackson's absolute devotion to the idea of doing justice ~~and to~~ to the slaves of this country, and that more than twenty five years of his life had been spent in endeavoring to make "atonement", as he ~~expected it~~ himself paid, for his own sins and for his fathers' sins against that people. This same people were still with us, - with wonderfully changed position indeed, yet destitute of ~~[illegible]~~ all save freedom, - ~~[illegible]~~ needing, & "intensely longing for", friends to stand by them with encouragement, sympathy, & counsel, ~~and~~ needing at a most critical hour education ~~in a thousand~~ in every direction, - moral & religious, social, industrial, & political, - for themselves & for their children. - ~~Here were the very people, to whom Francis Jackson had given so large a part of his life, & his best thought, reading, at a most critical hour, our Northern sympathy paid, & [illegible]~~ Give his money for them, of course; There cannot be a question about it. But how give it? ~~I have always objected~~ An ~~with organized~~ association existed, doing ~~organized to do all this things, and doing~~ all this necessary work ~~[illegible]~~ by the agency of ~~nearly~~ Eight Hundred or more ~~Northern~~ picked men & women, some of them 40 associates of Francis Jackson, and all of them moved ~~animated~~ by a spirit which he must have approved. In their work ~~white and black~~ no prejudice of color, as to teachers or taught, was suffered to come, - a sight which he would have rejoiced in from the depths of his true and manly heart. To that Association ~~most properly of all~~, caring & laboring for those as freedmen, for whom Francis Jackson cared & labored as slaves, most properly of all, in my judgment, should his fund be given.

2. I had a further reason. ~~With some it has seemed to have no weight. With me it has had much~~ much weight. Francis Jackson himself, for many years before his death, had strongly advised us against expending our Anti-slavery trust funds upon the "Standard". We ~~earnestly~~ ~~[illegible]~~, frequently, at

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Board meetings, at Executive Committee meetings, & elsewhere, objected to the appropriations which we made for the "Standard". This was not from any fault in the paper. He liked it, & cordially approved the conduct of it under successive editors. It was simply and solely because of its very limited circulation, never exceeding in his day, I believe, twenty six hundred subscribers. He deemed it unwise, therefore, to expend upon it our limited funds. It was not, as has been alleged, because he thought the "Liberator" sufficient. He would have rejoiced to have an uncompromising Antislavery journal in every State, could its circulation have warranted the cost of sustaining it. At the trustees' meeting (Jan. 28th) this fact, perfectly well remembered afterwards, did not occur to Mr. Garrison nor to Mr. Quincy. If it had occurred to them, (and it surely would have been called to the trustees' attention, had I been present,) I cannot doubt it would have prevented the vote which was taken. For if Mr. Jackson was thus averse to expending Antislavery funds upon the "Standard" when Slavery was alive, & dominant over Government & nation, is it credible that he would wish to restore thousands, when Slavery had ceased to exist? It is impossible for me to believe it. Let it be admitted, - and, so far from denying it, I constantly affirm it as the great fact in the case, - that the rights of the emancipated are not yet fully secured, & that great labor must yet be performed practically to invest them therewith, and I still say, and I say it all the more for that, Do not expend one dollar of this fund upon instrumentalities, however worthy otherwise, which do not bear directly upon the practical work to be done. 'Stand by those as freedmen, whom I stood by as slaves,' Francis Jackson would say. I will try to do so, both for myself, & as his representative.

It were wholly different, if, as in Mr. Jackson's time, the work of vindicating the negro's rights were confined to two or three journals in the whole land. Now the "Standard" has no longer a special antislavery functions. Journals of the first ability, and whose circulation is counted by the hundred thousand, make the uttermost demand for his rights as a man and citizen; and the Congress of the United States has by law recognized those rights, and ~~to~~ made provision for their exercise.

The charge then that funds "belonging to the American Antislavery Society" have been "misdirected", as made by Mr. Purvis, is without any foundation, and, so far as any of the trustees are concerned, inexcusable. The fund was left to no Society, but to be expended as the trustees "deem best." Equally unfounded is the intimation, in your paper of the 10th, that any of the Trustees "preferred to avail themselves of outside & prejudiced power to carry out their views". We did not seek the Supreme Court. We were carried there, much against our will, ~~very~~ much to our annoyance, by those who sought to divert into private channels Mr. Jackson's consecrated antislavery gift. The fund then went into the charge of the Court. If the decision of the Court is unsatisfactory to any antislavery person, let ~~the~~ censure go to those whose action placed the money there. I have never, at any moment, supposed that the Trustees' vote would determine the Court's decision. But, in any case, as a trustee, I must be governed, first, by Mr. Jackson's own direction, and, second, by the Court's instruction to appropriate it to the nearest similar use.

Mr. Phillips says (see "Standard", of Aug. 10.) that the appropriation of this ~~money~~ fund to the Freedmen's Cause is "a gross perversion of Mr. Jackson's money." But did not ~~he and~~ all the trustees, himself included, agree ~~at first~~ to give five thousand dollars of it to that object, at the meeting referred to? If $5000. may be rightly given, ~~why~~ how is it a "gross perversion" to give more? ~~And if any one trustee is faulty, how can any other~~

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But Mr. Phillips admits that the Freedmen's Bureau ~~[illegible]~~ (meaning, I suppose, the Freedmen's Union Commission, as the Bureau is not in the case at all, ~~[illegible]~~) is working for "the elevation, education, & protection of the free people of color", i.e. of ~~[illegible]~~ all the people of color. ~~[illegible]~~ And Senator Sumner has emphatically declared, in his place in the Senate, that "universal suffrage will be a barren sceptre without universal education". The work then that the Freedmen's Commission is doing is not important only, — ~~it is indispensable,~~ it is vital, it is fundamental, it is imperative. Then let us give it all the strength in our power, and let Mr. Jackson's money go to ~~elevate, educate, & protect~~ aid in this indispensable work. ~~[illegible] vital to the Nation's welfare, and to the individual security & welfare of every one of the emancipated.~~ To me, ~~[illegible]~~, the decision of the Supreme Court of the State appears, in the circumstances and at this ~~late day~~ time, wholly wise and just. In this opinion, and in the views generally above expressed, Mr. Quincy writes me that he cordially and fully concurs, although, he adds, he does not think any answer or explanation necessary, in view of the expected publication of Mr. Garrison's own letter submitted to the Master in Chancery.

~~And~~ For Mr. Garrison, surely, no word of mine is necessary. The almost universal ~~general~~ consent of the ~~[illegible]~~ advanced thought of the time is that he has taken no step backward, but has steadily advanced, & stands now ~~[illegible]~~ in the "front rank" of laborers for the freed people, and for humanity. The final verdict may be left, with entire content, to the great Future.

Respectfully, Yours, Samuel May Jr.

P.S. Since the above was ~~Respectfully~~ written, I have seen the "Standard" of Aug. 24th. I only add that it seems to me Mr. Phillips does Mr. Garrison injustice ~~wrong~~ in saying he "acted as if he were the sole trustee". The Court, through a Master in Chancery, put to the Trustees a certain inquiry. Mr. Garrison gave his individual, and as Mr. Phillips believes, his sincere, answer. Other trustees did the same. ~~On the result we had no~~

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